

COUNTRY DATA: CANADA : Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

A land of vast distances and rich natural resources, Canada became a self-governing dominion in 1867 while retaining ties to the British crown. Economically and technologically, the nation has developed in parallel with the US, its neighbor to the south across an unfortified border. Canada faces the political challenges of meeting public demands for quality improvements in health care, and education, social services, and economic competitiveness, as well as responding to the particular concerns of predominantly francophone Quebec. Canada also aims to develop its diverse energy resources while maintaining its commitment to the environment.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Northern North America, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean on the east, North Pacific Ocean on the west, and the Arctic Ocean on the north, north of the conterminous US
Area	total: 9,984,670 sq km country comparison to the world: 2 land: 9,093,507 sq km water: 891,163 sq km
Climate	varies from temperate in south to subarctic and arctic in north
Natural Resources	iron ore, nickel, zinc, copper, gold, lead, rare earth elements, molybdenum, potash, diamonds, silver, fish, timber, wildlife, coal, petroleum, natural gas, hydropower
Total Renewable Water Resources	3,300 cu km (1985)
Freshwater Withdrawal	total: 44.72 cu km/yr (domestic 20%/ industrial 69%/ agricultural 12%) per capita: 1,386 cu m/yr (1996)
Natural Hazards	continuous permafrost in north is a serious obstacle to development; cyclonic storms form east of the Rocky Mountains, a result of the mixing of air masses from the Arctic, Pacific, and North American interior, and produce most of the country's rain and snow east of the mountains volcanism: the vast majority of volcanoes in Western Canada's Coast Mountains remain dormant
Environmental Issues	air pollution and resulting acid rain severely affecting lakes and damaging forests; metal smelting, coal-burning utilities, and vehicle emissions impacting on agricultural and forest productivity; ocean waters becoming contaminated due to agricultural, industrial, mining, and forestry activities

PEOPLE

Population	34,030,589 (July 2011 est.)
Ethnic Groups	British Isles origin 28%, French origin 23%, other European 15%, Amerindian 2%, other, mostly Asian, African, Arab 6%, mixed background 26%
Religions	Roman Catholic 42.6%, Protestant 23.3% (including United Church 9.5%, Anglican 6.8%, Baptist 2.4%, Lutheran 2%), other Christian 4.4%, Muslim 1.9%, other and unspecified 11.8%, none 16% (2001 census)
Languages	English (official) 58.8%, French (official) 21.6%, other 19.6% (2006 Census)
Literacy Rate	definition: age 15 and over can read and write total population: 99% male: 99% female: 99% (2003 est.)
Major Infectious Diseases	HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate 0.3%; 68,000 people living with HIV/AIDS; fewer than 1,000 died by HIV/AIDS (2009 est.)
GOVERNMENT	
Type	a parliamentary democracy, a federation, and a constitutional monarchy
Independence	1 July 1867 (union of British North American colonies); 11 December 1931 (recognized by UK per Statute of Westminster)
Constitution	made up of unwritten and written acts, customs, judicial decisions, and traditions; the written part of the constitution consists of the Constitution Act of 29 March 1867, which created a federation of four provinces, and the Constitution Act of 17 April 1982, which transferred formal control over the constitution from Britain to Canada, and added a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as procedures for constitutional amendments
Legal System	based on English common law, except in Quebec, where civil law system based on French law (Napoleonic Code) prevails; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	wheat, barley, oilseed, tobacco, fruits, vegetables; dairy products; forest products; fish
Industries	transportation equipment, chemicals, processed and unprocessed minerals, food products, wood and paper products, fish products, petroleum and natural gas
Import commodities	machinery and equipment, motor vehicles and parts, crude oil, chemicals, electricity, durable consumer goods
Import Partners	US 51.1%, China 10.88%, Mexico 4.56% (2009)
Export Commodities	motor vehicles and parts, industrial machinery, aircraft, telecommunications equipment; chemicals, plastics, fertilizers; wood pulp, timber, crude petroleum, natural gas, electricity, aluminum

Export Partners	US 75.02%, UK 3.37%, China 3.09% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$39,600 (2010 est.)
Population below poverty line	9.4%; note - this figure is the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO), a calculation that results in higher figures than found in many comparable economies; Canada does not have an official poverty line (2008)

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.